

Employees collecting items for troop care packages

Employees of Hanford's Waste Treatment Plant Project are spearheading an effort to help out American troops deployed to foreign countries. The drive is being coordinated by WTP Procurement employees, who are gathering and shipping badly needed toiletries and other small items to military personnel.

"There is a great need for the simple items we take for granted, such as toilet paper, toothpaste and deodorant," said Mona Gautreaux of WTP Procurement. "These items are not always available, and when they are you have to stand in line for hours to get them."

Gautreaux's son and daughter-in-law have both been deployed. Thomas Gautreaux is in the Fourth ID Division Heavy Artillery, currently on "hold" status waiting for orders. Greta Gautreaux, a field medic, has been in Kuwait since January. The Gautreauxs have a seven-month-old daughter, Lisa, who is staying with relatives.



Mona Gautreaux's son Thomas and daughter-in-law Greta have both been deployed overseas to take part in the Iraqi conflict.

Gautreaux is gathering names and addresses of friends and fellow employees who have been deployed. She's also gathering donations of hotel-size or sample-size toiletry items to package and ship to military personnel. During past military deployments, people were able to ship letters and care packages to unnamed soldiers. However, because of concerns about the mailing of anthrax, only packages addressed to specific personnel with address information will be delivered.

These items are needed:

- empty shoeboxes for shipping
- baby wipes
- chewing gum
- disposable razors (military personnel must shave every day to ensure a proper fit of their chemical-biological warfare masks)
- moisturizing liquid soap or shower gel for shaving
- hand and body lotions
- paper, pens and air-mail envelopes for writing
- beef jerky
- snacks that can be carried easily (not large bags)
- baggies that seal, to keep dust out of personal items and to carry snacks in
- waterless hand sanitizers
- small tubes of toothpaste
- travel-size soaps, shampoos, conditioners, etc.

Money for shipping costs can also be donated. Because of the high temperatures in the areas where many troops are located, aerosol spray cans cannot be sent. Chocolates are also not advised, as they melt.

Donations should be sent to: U.S. Troop Care Package
P.O. Box 3445
Tri-Cities, WA 99302

Names and addresses of military personnel to receive care packages can also be sent to this address.

"We're not doing this for the war — we're doing this to support our people, our friends and family that are in need," said Gautreaux. "That's what family and friends are for."

For more information on how you can help, visit the Web site <http://operationmilitarypride.org/packages.html>. ■